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FARNASSUS





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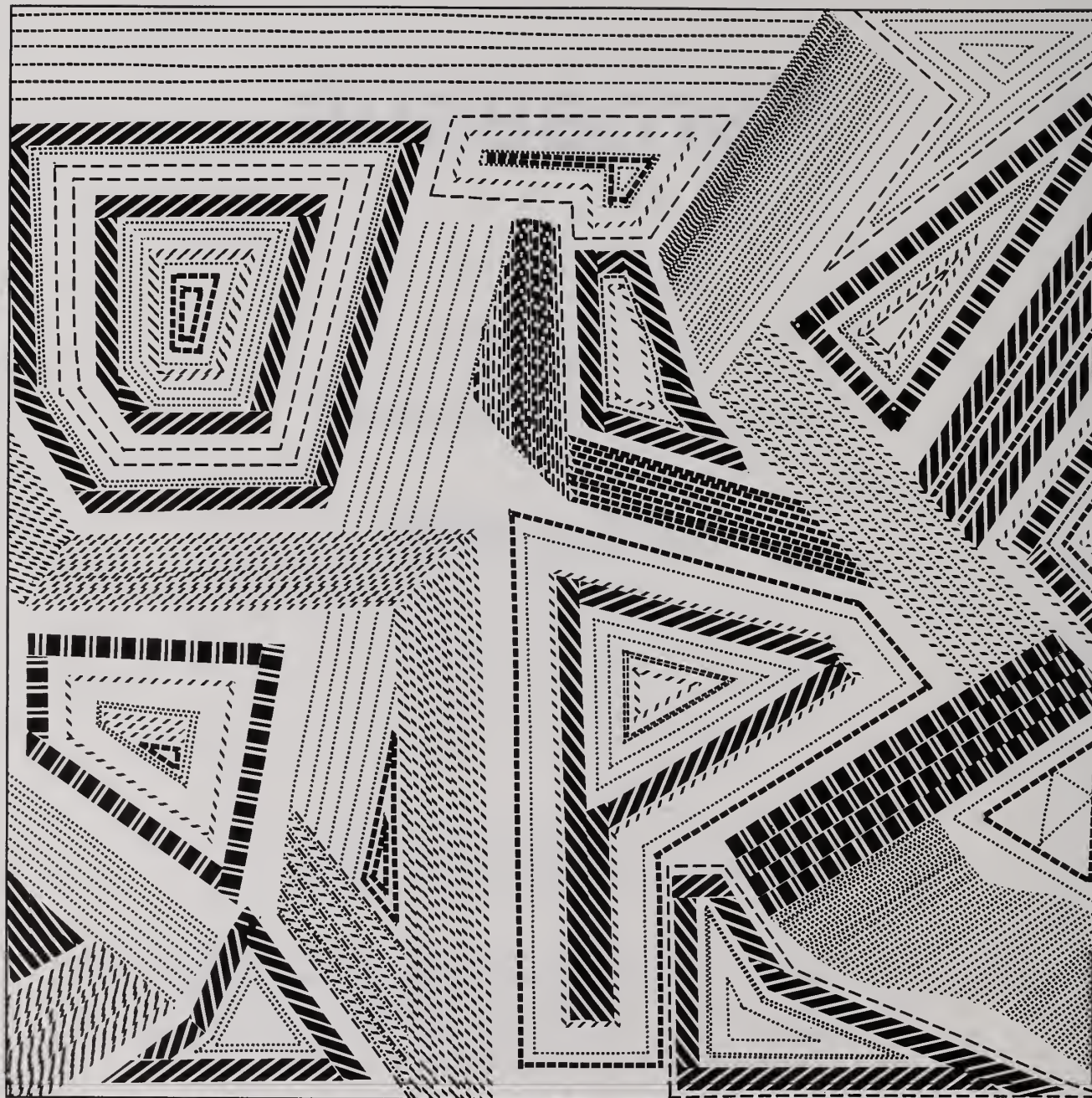
Parnassus

Inter-Arts Magazine
of
Northern Essex Community College

Spring 1990

Parnassus is the name of the mythological mountain home
of the nine muses who inspired humankind in the arts.

The policy of the editorial staff has been to select material for the magazine democratically. We have read each work submitted and viewed all artwork. We voted to determine eligibility: a majority vote for a piece meant publication. *Parnassus* provides an opportunity for new artists and writers to reach others; it's a showcase of Northern Essex Community College student creativity.



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Daddy! Oh!

To me Dad always seemed larger than life, a paradox in steel-toed construction boots. Although he stood a 5'9" in stature, my dad exuded the sheer physical presence of someone 6'3". Dad worked as an electrician at, in his words "The Greatest Mills in Gary, Indiana". Dad seemed as electrically charged as a live wire, full of energy with a lightening quick wit and moves to match.

His face tanned and lined, betrayed his past in vivid relief. Deep set hazel eyes with flashing yellow flecks peered out from his bushy black eyebrows. He had a bubble of a nose, long but wide, which had been broken more than once during street brawls in his youth. Although slight of built he had a scrappy, vigorous body. His arms were long and his muscles fluid, which made his quick movements seem light and graceful.

Long before the Merrill Lynch commercials became popular, when my dad, George Kopack, talked you listened. If there was a natural order in life at 1120 E. 56 Avenue in Merrillville, Indiana, George Kopack defined it. Talk of quitting school, disobeying parents or taking drugs wasn't tolerated. Dad drew a unyielding line so there could be no doubt when you crossed it. There were no discussions. You'd just did or you didn't do something. This was right. That was wrong. If you naively crossed the line, you knew that sparks would fly when dad came home. Life seemed easier then under his concrete rules and benevolent guidance.

His personality was forged in the depression, a victim of those tragic times. His life was

torn apart and patched back together by his own tenacity. The son of immigrant parents from Yugoslavia, he embraced the opportunities of this country as eagerly as a child unwraps gifts on Christmas morning. Dad had to quit school in the 9th grade to support his mom's family when my grandfather died. This was a sacrifice he rarely spoke of; however, it left him self conscious of the formal education he lacked.

Every school year was punctuated by the same word of wisdom. "You realize you're nothing without an education," his eyebrows knitted and eyes ignited as he spoke. "They can take away your car, your house, your job, but they can't take away what's in here," and he'd poke his calloused finger to my forehead. "It's there for life, a gift not to be thrown away but sharpened and used to its fullest extend, which I know you're capable of, after all you are your father's daughter."

Dinnertime with my father was always a lively, memorable exchange. I can see him now in his sleeveless white T-shirt, triumphantly ensconced at the head of the table. Talk of his favorite subject, politics, electrified the room. He expected us to have opinions and the facts to back them up. He espoused the sacred Democratic Party line and his own views. "Now John," he stated fervently, "Johnson knows what he's doing sending troops to Vietnam. None of my boys are going though. I've worked too long and hard to see you fight in that hell hole." During dinner my mom ceremoniously poured the coffee. Dad's hand reached for the sugar bowl, and I gasped. For you see, my dad had a sugar bowl fetish. The sugar bowl being empty or full determined whether our meal became a volatile fiasco or not.

He opened the bowl. His tired eyes



intently stared into the ceramic sugar bowl. To me, it seemed as if he was searching for something he lost. For my father, the sugar bowl only contained his shattered dreams and unaccomplished goals. I knew he yearned for the sugar bowl to be brimming with sweet rich things in life. But for him, the vacant bowl only yielded bitter reminders of a life he never attained. The bowl was empty again. In an instant, his fist pounded the table.

"Jesus Christ, sommana bitch," he roared. Plates marched across the table and filled milk glasses tumbled in the quake. Then it would all come out, like a downed high voltage wire, wildly snapping and twisting through the room. "I don't ask a lot from this family. Why can't this sugar bowl be filled? You kids have it too easy. You don't respect me, and this is how you show it." In a second the bowl was hurled above the table. My brother ducked the oncoming missile, and the sugar bowl crashed into the wall under the weight of my father's frustrations.

My father's rigid rules and fiery disposition were tempered by the outward affection and patience he showered on his children. He invented games and words in his nimble mind that when I think of them now, I still smile. "Shulffen Schlafen," "Cozy Coze," and "Hopsco Lopsco" were his ritual words for bedtime. At night we'd play games. "Camel" was one of my favorites. Dad was the camel. He'd bend down on all fours, and I'd hop on his back. We'd pretend I was lost from the caravan in the desert. He would creep slowly, my trusty camel, in search on an oasis. "Water, water, I'm so dry," said the swooning camel. "Just a little further ahead camel," I'd say. I'd jump off running to the glass of water and would give the

camel the first sip. The camel's eyes beamed with love and pride acknowledging the tenderness of our relationship.

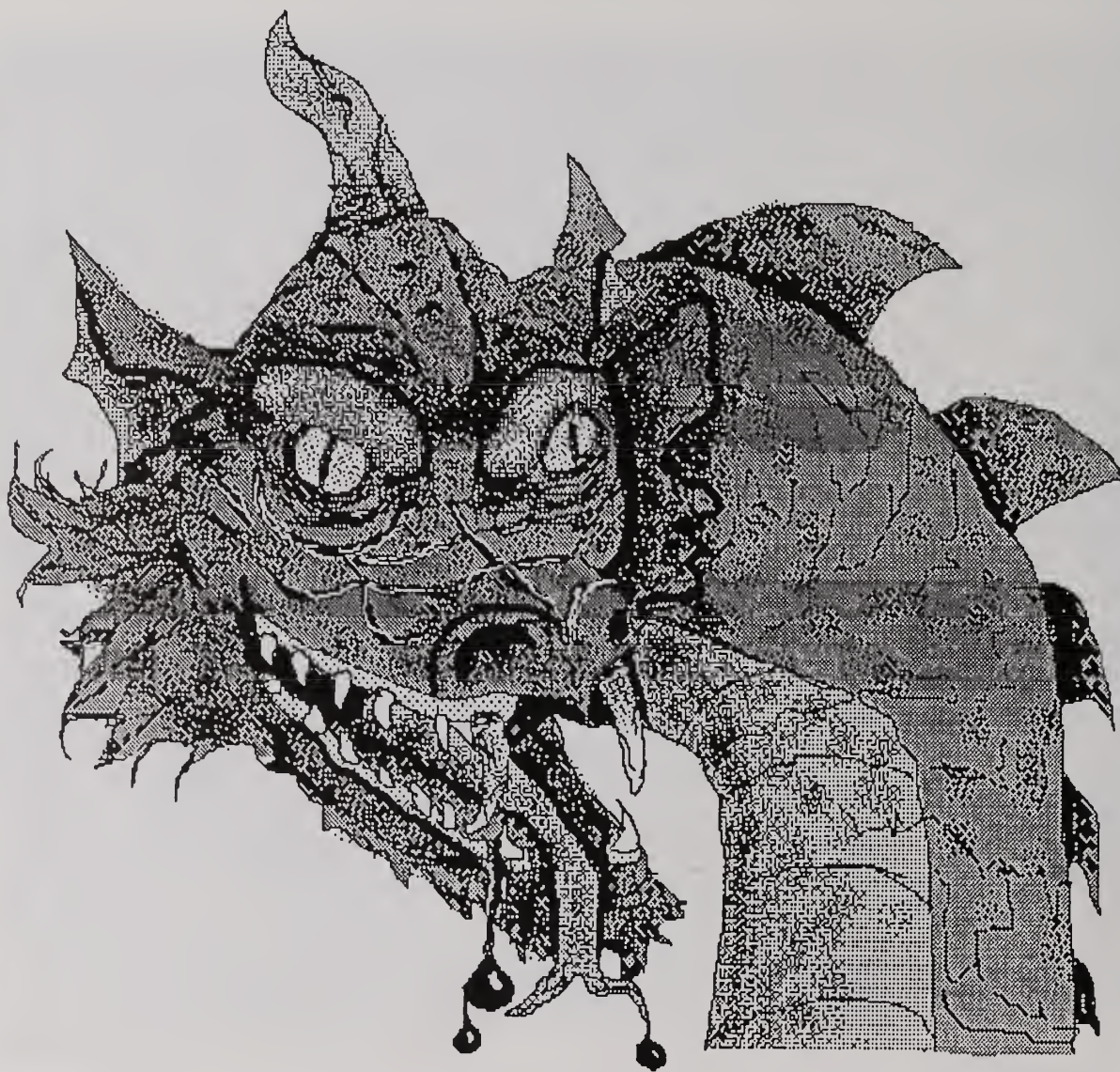
I still hear him now when I speak in soft, comforting tones or when my sarcastic tongue lashes out in rage. I feel him there at night when I'm tucking my children in "Cozy Coze" or romping with them on the living room floor. He molded my wit, my sense of humor, and my sense of self like a finely tuned instrument. My mother always said I was too much like my father. I don't know if it's true or not but as I look back, he definitely was my hero.

Luella Bishop





Kim Simones



Matthew R. Hunter



The Serpent

Coiled amidst the springs of darkness,
Rounding beneath the alluvial, weighted draughts of
green,
The twenty-ton scales of the serpent sinister
Rise and roll with covetous eyes turned upward at the
light,
Awaiting those who come to fish the fruit
From his paradise desert of salt, sea, and silence.
And so he has done, for legendary centuries to keep,
Drawn forth his fins and tail,
And gathered them through his maelstrom nets.
Cast before his mounted Main,
The wrecks of arks, bound and discarded,
Thickening, in ten thousand ages,
His sea, and his sides, and his bane.
So he will have it, for natural courses to come,
Until the white light burns red,
And the dark draughts are boiled into the air,
And the last thunderous wave cleanses him into death.

David Longshore





The Atomic Park Bench

Eagle was the first of the animals to sit on the atomic park bench; he sat quietly with his talons crossed (but in menacing sight) and watched the world. He watched the children with their toys, and listened to their singing as they pumped back and forth on the swings, or took turns on the merry-go-round. He watched their parents as they sat on the opposite benches and smiled at one another, talking all the while of what a lovely park it was.

It's a good world, Eagle thought. So wonderfully ordered, so stable, so peaceful; the dappled sunshine on lush trees, the merry children that played amongst their shadows, the content parents...

Presently, the Lion (who was a good friend of Eagle's) came marching past the bench, and Eagle called out to him.

"Come sit with me and watch the world."

Lion sat on the bench, crossed his paws (keeping them in view, of course) and produced a chess game.

"Shall we have a game?" he asked.

"I'd love to," Eagle replied. "I'll be white."

Lion set up the game and after a few moves, Eagle asked, "Isn't this a beautiful world?"

"Very beautiful indeed," answered Lion, who really wasn't paying much attention to the world- he was losing the chess game- "and so much like my own. You should visit my park sometime and watch the Lords and Ladies as they take tea. Such dignity, such freedom of movement...it's a marvelous system."

"So it is." Eagle watched as Lion moved a pawn, opening a knight up for attack. "Ha!" Eagle exclaimed, "I have a chance to take your Queen's knight!"

"Well, take it then, old boy," Lion said testily.

And Eagle bounced Lion's knight right off the board with a pawn. "That's the way it is in my park," he said, "a knight has nothing over a pawn here,"

Then Lion smiled and said, "This is a wonderful game," as he moved his Queen straight up from the eighth file and took the pawn. "That is the way it is in my park," Lion said. "The Queen can do as she likes there."

Soon, Great Brown Bear lumbered by and spotted Eagle and Lion on the bench. He swaggered over to speak with them.

Eagle quickly looked up at Lion and whispered, "Here comes Bear. He really isn't like either of us, is he? I don't think it's safe to let him sit with us, do you?"

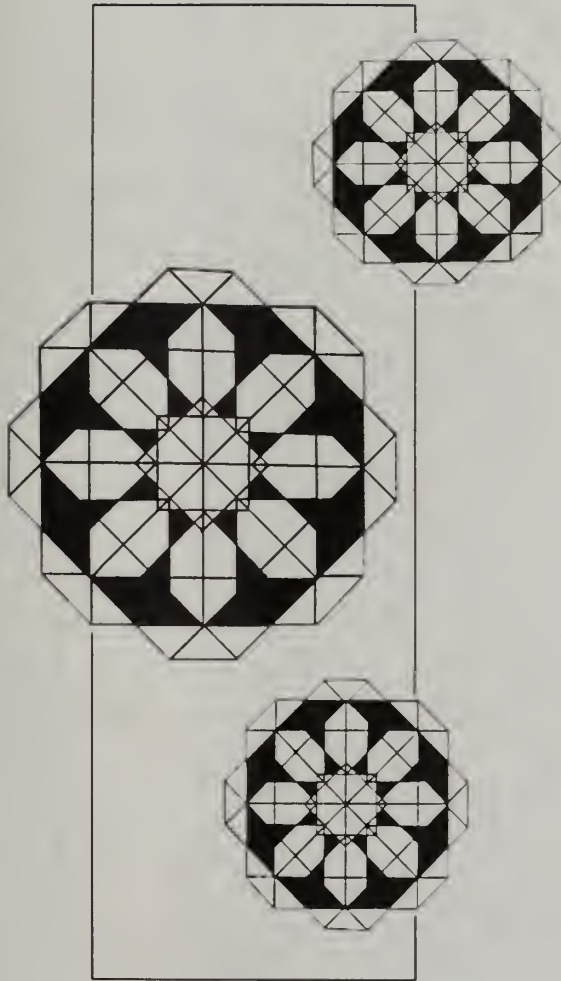
"Most certainly not," Lion agreed. "He's much too big..he really takes up too much space..and he does have a nasty habit of taking all the honey for himself. Of course, he is much bigger the either of us. I dare say we might ruin our splendid game of chess if we try to fight him. We better let him sit."

"All right," Eagle said. "But I'm not going to speak with him much."

"Neither shall I."

"Good afternoon," Bear said as he joined Eagle and Lion on the bench. He crossed his giant paws (keeping them in sight, naturally), and the bench creaked ominously under all this new weight.

"Really," Lion said haughtily, as he moved over to make room for Bear. "You really are just



Jo Landers

too fat. And you got that way from eating all the honey you stole."

Bear ignored Lion and asked if he could join them in playing chess.

"Absolutely not," Eagle said. "You don't follow the rules. In addition, there's only room for two in this game."

"Quite right," Lion added. "You tell me, Bear; what sort of game would chess become if it had three players instead of two?"

"We could take turns," suggested Bear.

"Certainly not!" answered Lion and Eagle in unison.

"Very well," sighed Bear. "If you don't want to share...I shall just sit here and watch the world."

"Don't watch my world, Bear," Eagle warned.

"And don't watch mine either," growled Lion.

Bear said nothing and watched the world anyway.

After a while, Black Horse pranced up and surprised Eagle, Lion and Bear by demanding that he be allowed to join them on the bench.

"That is impossible," Eagle said. "You are too young and inexperienced. You lack the wisdom to view the world from our seats."

"Certainly not," Lion said. "There is not enough room as it is."

"Well," Bear said, raising his bushy eyebrows, "he can always sit on my lap."

"I'm sorry," Eagle said, "but we cannot allow that. This bench was not designed to carry so much weight. It might collapse if Black Horse joins us."

"Then one of us will have to get up," Bear said.

"Not me," Eagle said. "I was here first."



"And if Eagle stays, I stay," Lion added.
 "Well, if both of you stay, then I'm staying," Bear said. And to Black Horse he said, "Come sit on my lap."

Black Horse sat on Bear's lap, and the bench creaked terribly, slowly rocking back and forth now. Eagle and Lion became alarmed and tried to push Black Horse from Bear's lap, but Bear wrapped his thick paws around him, holding on tightly.

"He's not going off," Bear said to Eagle and Lion.

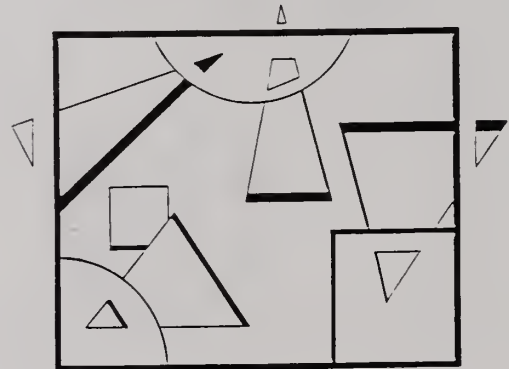
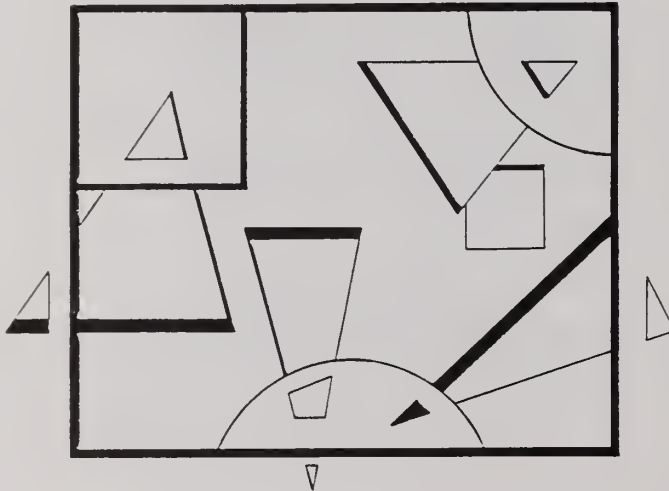
Eagle and Lion suddenly stopped pushing and began whispering between themselves.

Bear warned Black Horse that they were planning to use talons and claws in the next attack. "Better ready your hooves," he said.

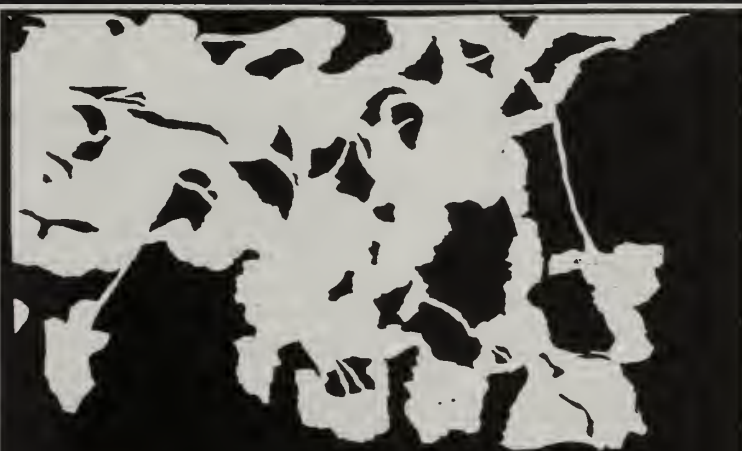
Eagle and Lion slowly turned uncrossing their talons and claws.. Bear and Black Horse turned to meet them uncrossing their paws and hooves...

But just then, with a crack like lightning, the bench collapsed under the weight of the quarreling animals, and they all went tumbling into a pile, amid the shattered wood and twisted metal of the atomic park bench.

David Longshore



John Bishop



Traci-Ann Durfee

Winter

you sleepily remember, the feel of the warm sun,
now that the day, is so much less than the night,
and your restless movement, can't keep the ice
away,
from your heart.

And then, you see her face, and it looks like the
wind,
blowing so cold-

you wake up with a start;
a new day of loneliness,
and you begin, a new day,
the only way,
that these days begin,
and
you take down the photograph,
and then you wonder where it is,

Is it in the

drawer,
underneath all the feelings that you get,
when you see her,
and you think of love.
and how cold it's going to get...

Ken Riley



The Starving Artist

Starving and freezing, the artist continues his walk across the bridge that will lead him to self-satisfaction and peace of mind. The journey is difficult, for the wind blows strong and the rain hits hard, but he knows he must continue. Inspiration is what gives him the desire to create a masterpiece - one greater than his last.

He looks around and sees mostly pain, suffering, violence and immoral behavior. All this is transformed into symbolism that is projected into an artistic form that holds much meaning for him. The symbolism he uses is stronger than any other expression he knows, for it comes from deep within his heart. The artist has found a way to let his feelings flow out of himself and into his work.

One night, while sitting at home, the artist began to create his most meaningful piece of work. He had just broken a long-term relationship with a girl that he loved very much. To add to his misery, he had been laid off from his job, which was his only way of paying the rent. His electricity had been shut off for over a week and much of his time was spent in solitude and darkness, for the cold was setting in and the days were growing short. All of his misery was starting to take the form of art as he sat by candlelight creating what appeared to be some strange, abstract self portrait, not a self portrait of his appearance, but a self portrait of his feelings.

As he got quite involved in his work his misery began to diminish as his aggression and

depression were being transformed into that symbolism that he could put on paper. His bad feelings flowed out of him like a current of electricity that came from his heart, down his arm and on to the paper. His heart began to beat faster as he sat back and looked over what had already been created. Obsession was beginning to take the place of his intense depression. The artist projects into his work the way he sees the world. To this day the artist looks at this piece of work that was created out of feelings of pain, and the entire era of his life is suddenly remembered with feeling.

The artist feels hunger so the people he creates are skinny and deformed. The artist feels pain, so the people he creates are tortured. When the artist feels pleasure and love, his pictures are calm and serene. The artist can look at his work and see himself and his feelings, and therefore understand himself better and learn from his mistakes. As the artist grows and understands more about life, his work will also grow and show more understanding of life. The artist realizes this, and so he chases the carrot on the stick, never reaching the end of understanding for there is no end to understanding.

With the rain still pouring and the wind still blowing, the artist continues his journey across the bridge that will lead him to self-satisfaction and peace of mind which is to him total understanding of life. It seems as though the artist will never be able to get all the way across this bridge.

This artist is me.

John Bishop







Two poems by Zachary Simmons

Pace Reasoning

It's hard to fit
 We all can bend
But only within reason
They are willing to rebel
 But they won't risk treason
Like a tough talking bully
With a glass jaw and fast legs-

None of that's for me
 Being honest and keeping an open mind
 Being human
 Be fair, don't come from
behind

Swelling up and down
Like waves in mid-ocean
A real man feels real emotion,
Going around and around
An amusement park ride
A real man works
 To touch the outside-

Then there are others
Who try their hardest on
 Being dishonest, and closing the mind
 Being mechanical, a tool
They are falling far, far behind

The Fourth Season

You can look
 Can see
 Feel and smell
 Hear and taste-

To touch the essence
A New England birthright
A place unaware of stage fright
 Now we look,
 Up and down to
 Orange orbs-

Like a peaceful day in autumn
 Complimentary moonlit paths
Summer ending a little too quick
Breathe and puff air
 That's sweet and crisp-

Your eyes and expressions
Painting in me
Permanent impressions
Smoking out of a time bong:
The dying are most spectacular
Just before they're gone-

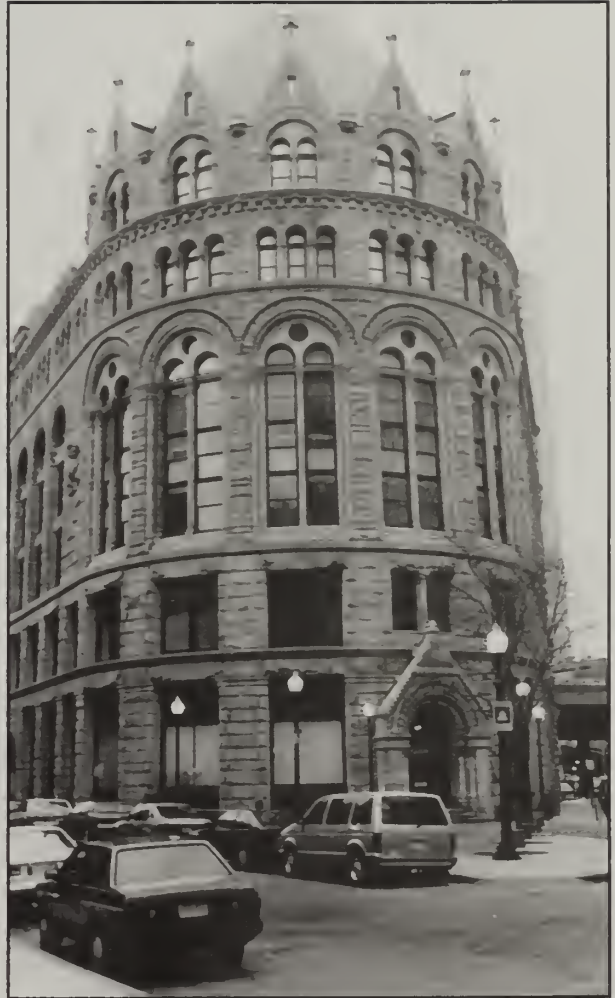


The Brown Leaf

An Irish clover it is not
But it resembles one
Not in size, shape, or even color
But in heart.
It lies still on the parlour floor.
Almost unnoticed,
But to my eye it stands out even more
Than the solemn, respectable faces
Which cover the floor.
Its brown color tells it all
Short is the life of a leaf in the fall
Why is it here?
Is there a message which it brings?
Perhaps, it is to tell us that time rules all things
Luckily is not the leaf for it sits here alone
Mourned by none and far from its home.
Its brown color tells it all
Short is the life of a leaf in the fall
The greening felled leaf rests now in the palm of my
hand
A symbol of love, an Irish blessing.
I will remember her
Spirit, that she brought to us all
Just as the leaf brings color in the fall
Its brown color tells it all
Short is the life of a leaf in the fall

Patrick Allen

Dedicated to the memory of
Kathleen M. Deacy



Leigh F. Musicof



Steve

There he stood! Filthy football uniform on, scraped knees with dried blood on both of them, one sock rolled down to his cleated shoes which were both full of mud, dirt on his face, a red baseball cap turned backwards on his head, a smile on his face and a Budweiser in his hand.

I don't know what he was smiling about. The team had just lost the game!

My heart gave a sudden lurch. He was quite handsome for sure, but what was that feeling I was experiencing? It had been so long since I had had good feelings inside of me due to a recent and bitter separation with my fiancé for five years. Until now I thought I was void of emotion.

Our eyes met, and he smiled at me. A sudden realization that I was much older than he was became quick disappointment. That disappointment abated somewhat as he strolled over to me.

"How you doing?" he said in a very soft, light voice that betrayed his large muscular frame.

Now why had I become suddenly so nervous. And my palms were starting to sweat profusely.

"Good, and you?" I said. Well, I think I said. I did hear words escape my mouth.

I suppose a simple exchange of greetings is a good start for any relationship. A beginning.

Steve and I spent the rest of the afternoon at the football party in small talk and chatting with mutual friends. We also made plans for dinner the next day.

At dinner Steve recalled details of his recent separation from his wife of six years. Although it had been a stormy marriage, the pain of separation coupled with feelings of great loss and finding himself alone were very fresh.

Why was he being so open with me?

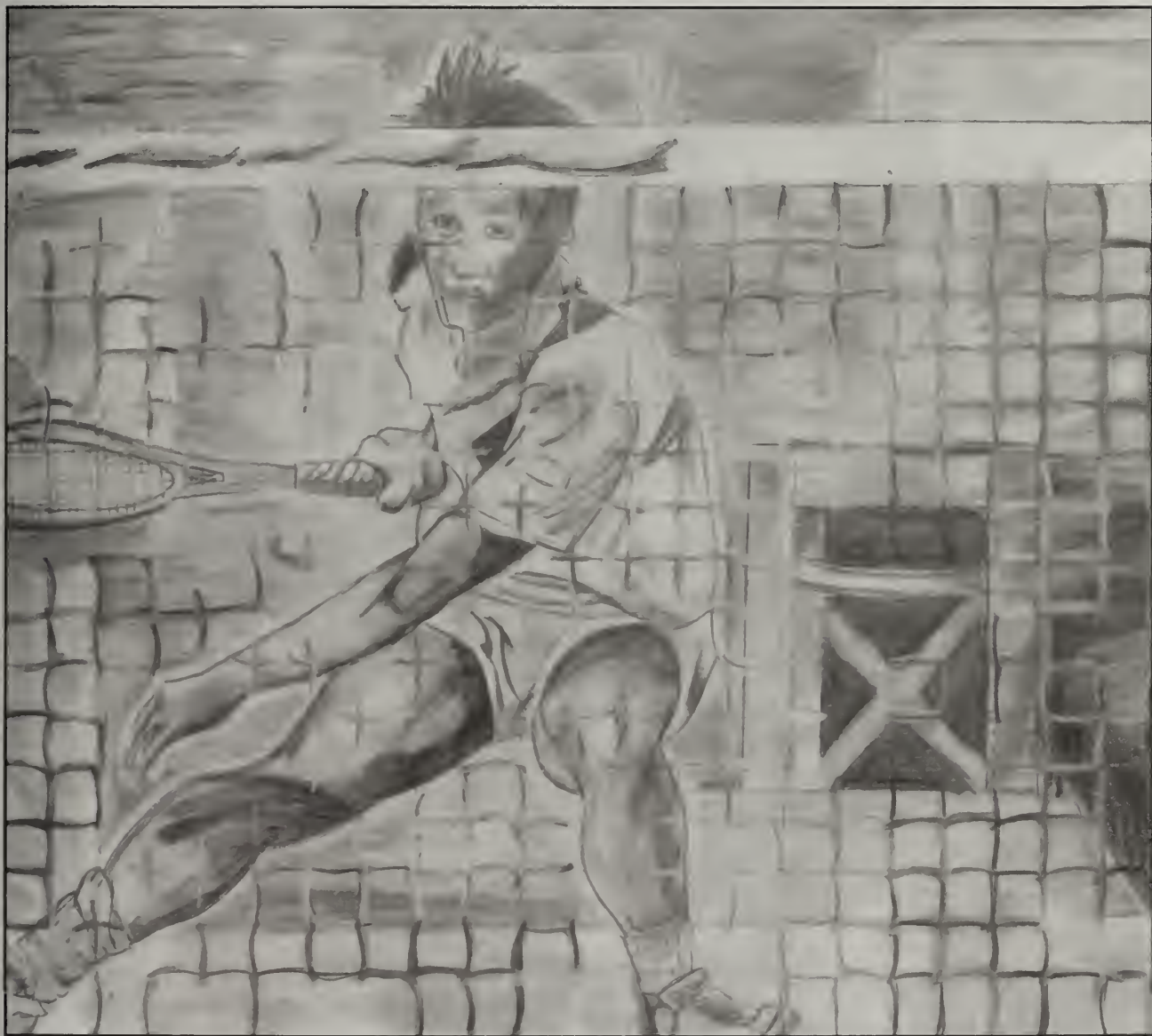
I conveyed the fact that I also was recently separated. That I could not offer marriage to the gentleman was the deciding factor for an end to our relationship. I was confused that perhaps I had made an error in my decision. I also shared those same feelings of loss as he did.

Now why was I being so open with him?

We were both experiencing similar grief. We realized later that our grief was the binding substance for the close relationship that quickly developed. We were like two ships being tossed about on a cold, black, turbulent sea both in need of a safe harbor. Perhaps we had found that harbor in one another.

We talked in great depth of our needs during the hardships we were presently encountering. I knew at the moment we would each be there for the other when the need arose for support and strength. Like bandages for one another while our hearts were on the mend.

Although I do not look my age, I am, however, eleven years older than Steve. I guess that would normally be okay, but he looks eleven years younger than his twenty-seven years! An almost perfect specimen of manhood, Steve is not overly tall. He has a beautifully



Eric Ryan



Alan Kenyon

shaped and toned physique from years of weight lifting and school boy sports that have continued into adulthood. With curly, dark blonde hair (that's a little on the long side) and large innocent-looking blue eyes, he almost looks like a sweet, innocent cherub. That is if it were not for his mischievous smile. And a very mischievous smile it is indeed! When I see that smile on his face, I know I can expect one of his "old lady one-liners."

"You can still see that far?"

"Need help going up those stairs?"

"Do you use a cane when you jog?"

"Do older people always take that many vitamins?"

"Tell me the truth, you listen to WSSH on the radio, don't you?"

Well, it was a payback time. After weeks of thought, it only took one stop at a magazine rack where I spotted it accidentally...a Winnie-the-Pooh coloring book! I thought I might as well purchase the crayons too! I started to laugh out loud in the store as I envisioned the look on Steve's face as he opened the package.

At his house that week-end I was quick to deliver the wrapped surprise into his waiting hands. Maybe I should not have had that silly grin on my face. He could have become suspicious. As he opened the package and caught a glimpse of its contents, he began to laugh uproariously.

"You finally got me!" he exclaimed.

At that point I could not contain my joy any longer, and together we laughed like young children. Not to be outdone, Steve proceeded to color a picture of Winnie-the-Pooh from the book which he named "patchwork Winnie."

Steve has been very important to me during this crisis in my life. His youthful vitality

has given me laughter, joy and a brief recapturing of lost youth. His understanding of me and his encouragement has given me the strength and confidence needed to step out of myself and explore life, to go forward in career decisions and in school. When I find myself confused or in despair, Steve is only a phone call away, always there to listen and ready to help if needed.

We don't see each other as often as I would like. I don't believe he is aware how vital he is in my life. I happily take the crumbs of time that we share and try to make each meeting a joyous occasion for us both.

What do I mean to Steve? I would like to believe that what he is to me, I am to him. To a very large degree, I know I am. I'm always there for him whether it be a phone call or a meeting. I try to listen intently as he speaks for better understanding. He never holds back when relating problems to me. He seeks me out as a place of quiet reserve.

Do we love one another? One of the definitions found in Webster's *Ninth Collegiate Dictionary* is "unselfish, loyal and benevolent concern for the good of another." That definition fits. Certainly Steve holds a very special place in my heart that will never be filled by another.

Steve has several qualities that I admire, one of which I'm quite envious of. He possesses a mind for math. As a prominent young engineer at Raytheon, math is an integral part of his daily routine. I struggle trying to find a one dollar and fifty-three cent error in my check book. His clever wit and boyish humor can quickly turn into unparalleled professionalism at any given moment. His quiet, unpretentious intelligence sits carefully beneath his facade of the school boy image he portrays. Because of his infectious personality I am proud to be with

him anywhere, whether we are skiing, dancing, walking on the beach in sub-zero temperatures daring the other to take a dip, having a snowball fight, betting on football games or just munching pizza and drinking beer while we do some serious talking. These are some of the qualities I both need and desire from a future mate.

Our relationship began under unique

circumstances, and our friendship continues to blossom. We can never be more than what we have evolved to be, and we will not strive for more.

The door bell is ringing. I know it is my friend, Steve, coming for dinner. With a smile on my face and in my heart as well, I open the door. There he stands!

Brenda Croteau



Elin Thomas



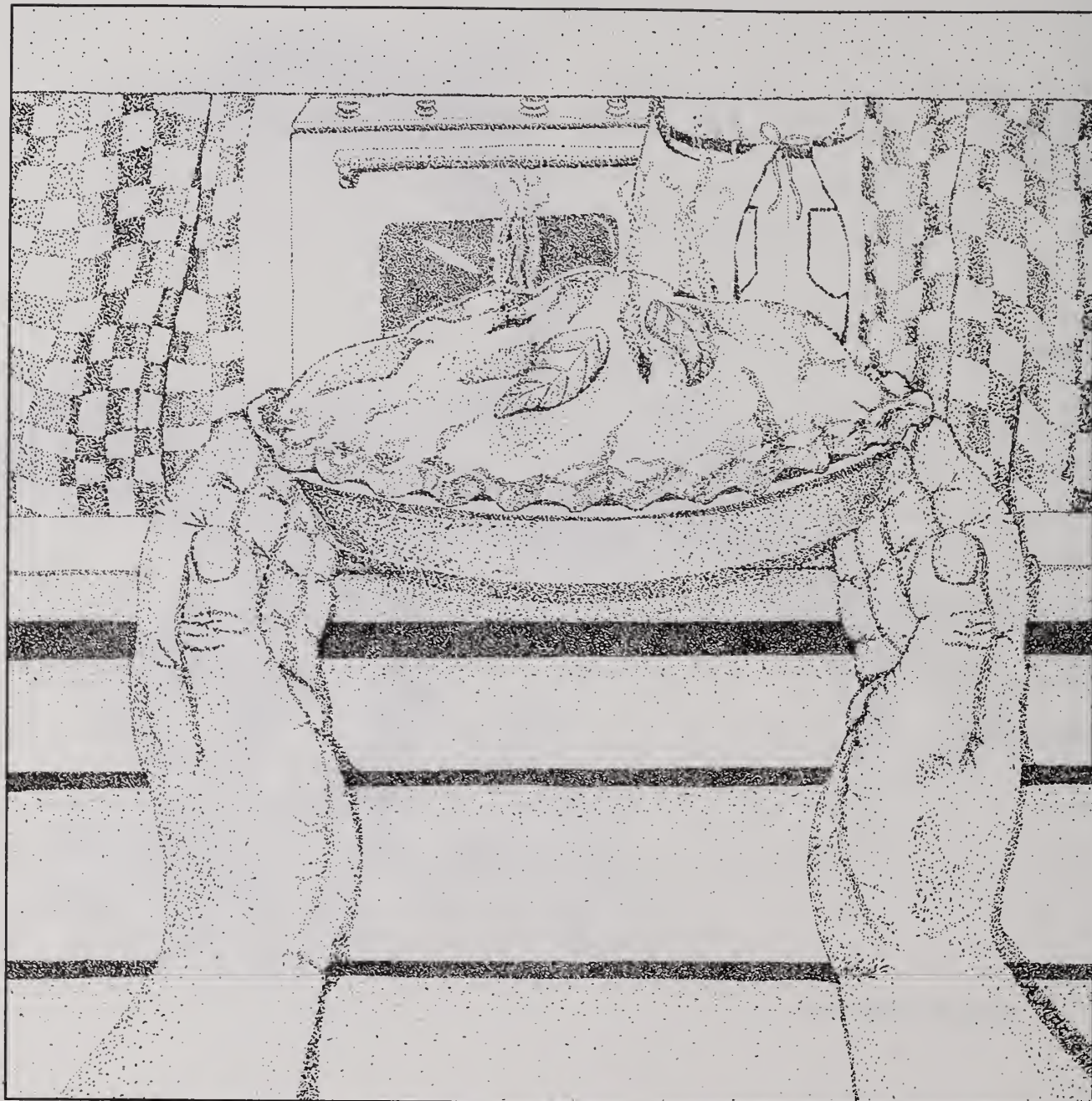
Sandcastles

I built my love with grains of sand
to form a castle
I put high towers upon it
to reach the sky
I cut out windows at every angle
to see the world around
I made a bridge to walk away
and travel
I built a moat to keep away intruders
I built a castle for you one day
But the tide came in
It washed away.

Sharon Letendre

Anne M. Galarneau







Bag Lady

She had been dreaming of a warm tropical place with sandy beaches when she suddenly felt a kick in her side. Consciousness came slowly. She realized the man was yelling. "Come on Edna, get up, the store is opening in half an hour. You've got to get out of here. Bed time's over!" She opened her eyes. The sun glared at her. She snapped them shut again. "Oh, no you don't! You should have been out of here by now. I'm not losing my pension cause of you!"

She struggled to get up. It seemed like pain shot through every part of her body as she lifted herself off the ground. She didn't want Bernie to be mad at her. He was the night shift security guard at the store, and he let her sleep in the back doorway, just as long as she was out of there before his bosses showed up. It was one of the best doorways around, and she didn't want to lose it. It was set in deep so the wind and rain didn't get at her.

Bernie was at her to hurry up. He reached out to help her and pulled back suddenly. "Jesus, you smell worse than ever today. Why don't you go to one of those shelters and take a bath or something. You nearly knocked me out." She ignored his comments. She grabbed her cart which contained bags of everything and anything. Some of it was from before; when things were different, but most of it she had collected along the way. She had stuff from garbage cans, off the streets, and out of dumpsters. Sometimes she could not believe

what people would actually throw away. And they thought she was the crazy one! She walked out onto the side walk with Bernie behind her mumbling. As soon as he saw that she was on her way, he turned back and went inside the store.

It rained the night before, and despite the morning sun there were puddles of water on the sidewalk. Edna felt the water seep through the holes in her shoes. She didn't have socks on. She only had a few decent pairs, and she was saving those for when it got real cold and bitter out. Mornings seemed to be the hardest time for Edna both physically and emotionally. Her whole body would ache from sleeping crouched up on the concrete; and morning was when she had to wake up and remember who she was, now. She really couldn't remember who she had been before. She did know that who she was now was her way of hiding from the past. She vaguely remembered having a "real life"—a husband, a child, a house, the works—but that was it. It seemed like the rest was locked away somewhere in her mind. Something had happened that caused everything to crumble.

Her whole life consisted of finding a way to get food or booze, staying warm, avoiding people, and sleeping. Sleeping was her favorite thing. She could forget for a little while and dream. She always had the same dream. It would be in different places, but it was always the same. She dreamed of having some place soft and warm to sleep; sleep whenever she wanted to. One of her favorite dreams was of sleeping in a big, plush, comfortable bed with layers and layers of thick blankets and quilts and big, fat, plump pillows. Her dreams never had people in them. People were trouble; only nightmares had people in them. People only



Joellen Wood

caused you pain in the end. Bernie was about the closest thing she had to a friend. He let her sleep in the doorway of the store, and he didn't call the cops or ask too many questions.

Sometimes when it got so cold she couldn't even move or she couldn't find anything to eat, she would go to the shelter for the homeless. Occasionally a social worker or minister would try to talk to her and try to convince her to change her ways. She would shut her eyes and block them out by humming to herself. Eventually they would give up. She had the knack for getting rid of people. Mainly though, because of her smell and appearance, everyone stayed clear of her.

She shuffled down the street for the local grocery store. She wanted to turn in her empty cans she had collected the night before. She got to the doors. They weren't open yet. She started pushing her cart around the parking lot to see if she could find anything good. She spotted a beer can and headed toward it. A car swerved past her the horn blaring. The car stopped and a woman stepped out leering at Edna. She ignored her and continued to investigate the parking lot. She didn't do too badly. She found two empty cans, a half smoked cigarette, two dimes and three pennies.

Satisfied with her search, she headed back to the store with her cart. She walked up to the counter and piled her dirty cans up onto it. It always took a while before someone would wait on her. The boss yelled at someone to go over and get rid of her. The disgruntled cashier came over and hastily counted her cans, snapping at her and practically throwing the money at her. Edna was starting to feel hungry, so she decided to try the dumpster before wasting any money. All the employees were

watching her in disgust. She spat on the floor chuckling to herself. That'll give them something to talk about.

She walked around to the back of the grocery store to the dumpster. It was unbelievable what they would throw away. She always found something to eat as long as she got there before they emptied it. Getting in was the hard part; getting in and not getting caught. She found some crates and stacked them up. She started climbing hanging on to the sides of the dumpster. Suddenly one of the crates moved and crashed to the ground. Groaning, she lifted herself up and tried again. This time she made it to the top. She lifted her leg over the edge and realized it was bleeding. Oh well, she would take care of it later; right now she just wanted to eat. She climbed in and right off she spotted a box of apples. They didn't look too bad either. A couple were rotten, but mostly they were just bruised. She picked one out to eat and shoved the rest into the bag she had brought with her.

She explored some more. She dug around. Her hand felt something strange. With her other hand she moved the paper and garbage that was over it. As she cleared everything away a sick feeling began to bite at the pit of her stomach when she realized it was — a baby. A dead baby. Impulsively she picked it up. She didn't know why. When she held the baby in her arms, something inside her snapped. She started remembering the past. She remembered the pain she had locked in long before.

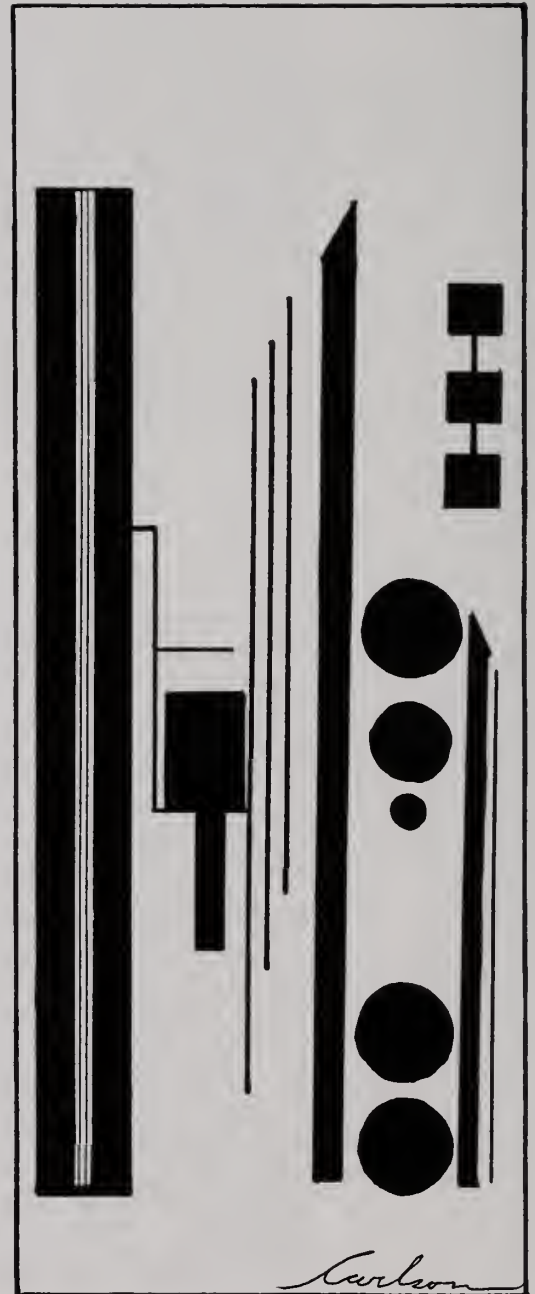
She held the baby and rocked it in her arms. She remembered doing this before except that time it was her little girl. Her memories broke loose. She had put her daughter down for a nap and then proceeded to get drunk. She hadn't intended to get drunk, but she was tense

and needed to calm her nerves. Her husband was not home. She had passed out. When she came to, she heard sirens. They were stopping in front of her house, and her husband was screaming at her. He told her that Heidi had gotten out of her room and fallen down the stairs. Her husband's screams cut through her—"She's dead! Dead! You killed her, you drunken bitch! You killed her!" She remembered the pain— all of it. She couldn't be dead. She held the child in her arms and rocked her. She did not want to let go. She kept rocking, back and forth, back and forth...

They came and took the baby out of her arms and helped her out of the dumpster. She let them. She had no strength left now. They took her to the hospital and a lot of people asked her questions she did not want to answer. She sat and rocked back and forth. Sometimes it seemed like she was outside looking in. Finally they stopped asking her questions and left her alone. They put her in a room with a soft bed with pillows and blankets. At least she had a warm place to sleep.

Eileen Sheldon

Jay Carlson





Age of Reason

The bus stops. Descending on jaded stairs
I meet the curb on course to cross the steel
Bound bridge. Drawn to the rail stopping to stare
Down deep into the vast darkness, I feel
As though pulled toward a waiting past;
Yet pushed to this crux by what I believe,
Compelled by specters the mind does cast:
Country folk in complacent comfort; thieves
Of countless possibly passionate nights,
Bible beaters, players of parlor games
Bask in the picture tube's hypnotic light
Till naked in blankets returned as they came,
Reading the Good Book before sleep lays claim,
Wasted youth tends the fields; tedious shame.
Against abutments an angry river
Heard churning and rushing makes its own way
Here on Earth: a time tested survivor.
Inspired; I gaze where the horizon lay
Glowing as a maiden having found love
And soothing with delicate gold fingers.
The dark face of the jealous night above.
Then content for a short time to linger
Aside the asphalt vein, viewing this sight;
I ponder it...gorgeous, yet familiar...
Before searching its jumping heart of light
With faith that dreams will become fulfilled there.

Ralph Potter





Disconnect

I told him I was hurting, and he turned away. I told him I loved him, and he walked away. I told him it was a lie. I shouted, "I don't need you!" and he ran away. He doesn't like being scared or feeling guilty, so he avoids everything, rejects everything that could invite an emotion. But emotions are human. Does he not want to be human? Does anyone? The dogs are growling and becoming more like people. They are ignoring the routines that are typical of dog life; chasing cats in search of someone cute to play with. This can't be nature.

Mother Nature is leaving us, but can we blame her? Everything we do drives her away. Only she knows what it is truly like to be unwanted. I've hurt her. I know that, but I still love her. I would die without her. So would you. She heals us, but who is there to heal her? She is being drained of energy, but there is not a vitamin pill big enough or strong enough for her, not yet. Her vitamin pill needs to cover her like a blanket of leaves. But instead of sewing the blanket, we are burning it. Why? To feed cholesterol factories that will surely die with the consumption of one more greasy tree burger at a fast food joint. I'm giving those places up. Nature made me certain things the way they are so they could be used for human fuel and medicine without having to be sacrificed. If I turn fifty, I could be looking at a world of hot sand and suffocation unless we open our eyes and turn them towards Brazil and other such

places where the death rate is already climbing at an alarming rate everyday. Everyday we get football fields closer to suffocation. The world will become a giant coffin, and everybody will be buried alive in it, clawing at our throats and grasping, "If only I hadn't gone through that drive-thru and eaten that greasy tree burger."

Trees and plants don't have emotions. So if we are losing ours, then we truly are killing our own kind. We cannot disconnect ourselves from nature when we are as much a part of it as growling dogs and flaming trees. Anyway you look at it, as we burn the rainforests, we burn ourselves. My mother always told me not to play with fire. Didn't yours?

Julie A. Cunningham





Darlene Passalaqua



An Inner Strength

The coldness of the hard sand shocks the bottoms of my feet. I begin to move faster. The muscles in my calves begin to pull, causing pain but I know that this will be a worthwhile experience. A cool breeze pounds against my body as I fight Mother Nature.

As I look ahead I can see forever. At the moment I am by myself. I feel freedom. I hear only the sound of the latest dance music blaring from my Walkman.

I begin to gain more speed. A tightening in my legs causes pain so intense it's all I can concentrate on. The challenge of every stride becomes greater, but a feeling of happiness overwhelms me. Everything that was bothering me seems trivial. The pressure of the outside world no longer prevails. Problems with parents, friends, and work no longer seem important. Pleasant memories of past experiences here fill my thoughts. This is a place it seems I've known forever, like a rare friend who is always there through the good and bad. It has served many purposes in my life. It was a playground when I was a small child. As a teenager it was the place to party. As an adult it was somewhere to escape with a special boyfriend to avoid reality. I feel like a person because there is no reason to perform acts or impressions. I am open to my thoughts because there are no forced expectations or responsibilities.

It is a place I run to for tranquility. I can compare my actions to the sandpiper that runs

back and forth trying to avoid being captured by the waves as they search for food for survival. I run from the real world for the same type of nourishment that only exists here.

I am alone with myself. I feel confident. I can think clearly and have a positive outlook. I have weathered storms in my life and gain the strength to survive more here.

Above seagulls are being tossed around in the wind, as if they have no control over their destination. Although I may not be able to predict my future, I have a destination to reach: the rocks which aren't in sight yet but I know exist provide a purpose and reason to be here.

I see a red kite in the air flying high above everything. As though it was representing the challenge of life: no matter how high you set your goals, there is always something higher. You should be prepared for a fall with the knowledge that it is possible to pick yourself up.

Icy cold water splashes up and hits my sweating body. It gives the pain some relief, in turn giving me incentive and energy to reach my goal.

The waves continue to crash over each other, never ending as they hit the shore line. Each one fulfilling its part. A symbol to me of the way people interact. Each person performing a role making it possible to function as a whole society.

I keep moving as the run becomes more intense. I could never stop now because I don't want to fail. I hurt all over. Instead of letting the pain take over, I fight it. I remember the romantic walks and the late night swims, the relaxing afternoons endlessly laying in the sun with friends.

I am at ease because there is no place that I would rather be. Seashells cover the

beach. They all look alike at first, and it takes time to notice their individuality. I think they are like people. People should look at others and notice their individuality and learn to respect them for who they really are. It is important to take the time to understand that everyone is different, which makes life interesting.

The pressure on my legs makes me want to give up. I don't because I know to quit would hurt more emotionally than any physical pain this workout would bring.

I have reached the rocks. There is no victory celebration. The pressure is off, and I have gained self-satisfaction.

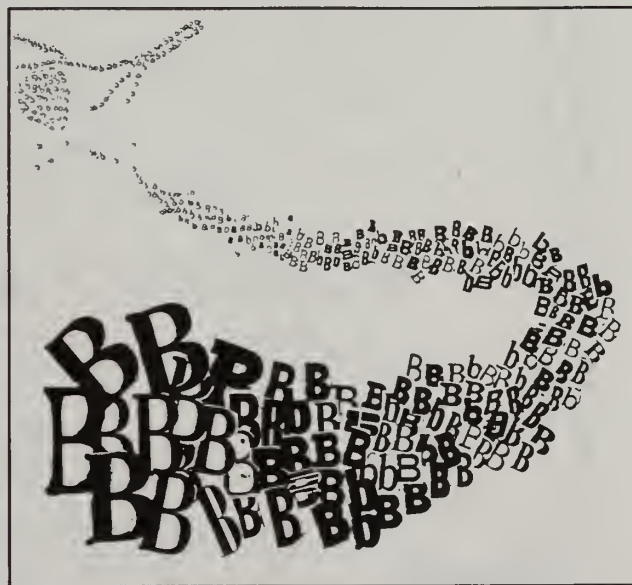
I turn to run back to the starting point. Like a ship returning to port, or a surfer swimming to catch the next wave, or a frisbee being returned to the thrower.

I feel a sense of accomplishment. Everything around me makes me content. I can enter the world again, not feeling like a grain of sand but a person who can make a difference. The workout has reminded me of life. I realize I have the ability to set and obtain goals. This is possible by appreciation and a positive attitude. By fighting a negative outlook, I believe it is possible to find the courage and confidence to never give up.

Rebecca Ann Sherman



Sandy Guy



Jeff Gleason



Worst Case

Rap by EN 4481/15

Walk - in' bare - foot down the beach, I

stepped up - on a sil - my crea - ture. I

went to wade out in the wa - ter. Guess what I saw - a dead sea at - ter. I

took a whiff of con - tam - I - not - ed air.

Trees and plants were dy - ing eve - ry - where. The land a - round was all cor - rod - ed.

Guess what? What? Sea - brook has ex - plod - ed

Refrain

Look here comes the ra - di - a - tion. This is some e - vac - u - a - tion.

As I ran a - way, The sky turned gray, And

clouds be - gon to form. I touched my head. It be - gon to shed. Then

all my hair was gone.

Refrain

Look here comes the ra - di - a - tion. This is some e - vac - u - a - tion My

minds full of con - fu - sion. I

Notated by M. Finegold on a Macintosh using Finale 2.0 software.

hope It's an il-lu-sion. I heard a loud horn blow-ing, But there's
no place to get go-ing. The Sea-brook pow-er sta-tion, Was
leak-ing rad-i-a-tion, And
Route Two flight-y six is real-ly in a fix. I'm 'trapped like a sard-line; I
think I'll start to scream.

Refrain Look here comes the ra-di-a-tion. This is some e-vac-u-a-tion.
In case you did-n't know, This case scen-ar-i-o is
no ex-cuse for mirth. If we give it the "go", The peo-ple that we know Will
not ex-ist on earth. Let's stop it in-stead. Let's end Sea-brook's dread, 'Cause
we know what life's worth.

Final Refrain
There's no es-cape from a nu-cle-ar show-er,
Don't put the plant on full pow-er.

Performed by the NECC Chorus Spring 1990 Notated by M. Finegold on a Macintosh using Finale 2.0 software.







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